MR. M. SIVATHANU PILLAI: May I know on what special grounds Government thought it fit to encourage this company?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA M. K. NILAKANTA AIYAR: Sir, the thing happened in 1938 and I have to look into the papers to answer that question.

PRESIDENT: Are these ordinarily given on tender?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA M. K. NILAKANTA AIYAR: No, Sir.

MR. M. SIVATHANU PILLAI: What was the special reason to give such orders without calling for tenders?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA M. K. NILAKANTA AIYAR: Sir, I said that this took place in 1938.

MR. PADIYARA JOSEPH KUNJU: കമ്പനിക്കാർ ഏറെറടുത്ത ജോലി ശരിയായി നിർവഹിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടോ എന്നു പ്രസ്താവിക്കുവാൻ മടിയുണ്ടാകുമോ?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA M. K. NILAKANTA AIYAR: : ഉണ്ട്.

MR. M. SIVATHANU PILLAI: Is there no other company which is able to cope with the situation?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA M. K. NILAKANTA AIYAR: That does not arise.

MR. M. SIVATHANU PILLAI: May I know whether Government cared to see whether there are other companies which are prepared to offer better terms for the contract?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA M. K. NILAKANTA AIYAR: That does not arise.

MR. M. SIVATHANU PILLAI: Sir, I rise to a point of order. Is it for the Honourable Member to say whether the question arises or not?

PRESIDENT: I suppose he is submitting to the Chair that the question does not arise.

Price of rice in the Travancore markets.

252. *MR. K. R. NARAYANAN (*Vaikam* cum *Kottayam*): Will the Government be pleased to state whether the merchants are unduly inflating the price of rice in the Travancore markets and if so will they be pleased to state the action taken by them on the matter?

MR. S. RAMAKRISHNA AIYAR (*Controller of food supplies*): Some increase of price is noticed from February onwards in the markets of the State. This is only in keeping with the higher rates in outside markets from where the articles in question are largely imported. Instances of speculative capitalists making large purchases of paddy and rice from Travancore with a view to profiteering were brought to the notice of Government, and instructions were issued to the officers concerned to watch the situation and to prevent export of the food stuffs on a commercial basis from the State and thus prevent inflation in the price of such essential food stuffs.

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[Mr. S. Ramakrishna Aiyar.]

Due to scarcity of shipping space, the price of Burma rice rose and the Government therefore negotiated with the export agencies in such places like Bengal, Coorg and South India and finally succeeded in stocking some rice from Burma and South India as a measure of control of the price of rice.

Bridges in Trivandrum.

253. *MR. MURUKKUMPUZHA V. KUNJUKRISHNAN (*Neyyattinkara* cum *Trivandrum*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) the names of the bridges within the City of Trivandrum over which heavy load traffic has been prohibited; and

(*b*) the dates from which such prohibtion was made?

MR. I. C. CHACKO: (*a*) & (*b*) A *statement containing the information is laid on the table.

MR. MURUKKUMPUZHA V. KUNJUKRISHNAN: May I know why the information with regard to the Kaudiyar—Pattam road is not forthcoming?

MR. I. C. CHACKO: It is not forthcoming.

MR. MURUKKUMPUZHA V. KUNJUKRISHNAN: May I know the condition of that bridge?

MR. I. C. CHACKO: It is fit for light traffic.

MR. MURUKKUMPUZHA V. KUNJUKRISHNAN: Since it is now 14 years that the heavy loaded traffic on the Kannanmoola bridge has been prohibited, may I know whether the question of reconstructing that bridge has been considered by the Government?

MR. I. C. CHACKO: There is a proposal to divert the drainage channel. Until that is decided, the question of reconstructing the bridge will not be taken up.

MR. MURUKKUMPUZHA V. KUNJUKRISHNAN: May I know how long it will take for the Department to come to a conclusion?

MR. I. C. CHACKO: I cannot say the exact period.

MR. MURUKKUMPUZHA V. KUNJUKRISHNAN: May I know whether the member is aware that this particular bridge is in a very dangerous condition?

MR. I. C. CHACKO: It is fit for light traffic.

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI: May I know the authority that prohibited heavy traffic over the bridge on the Kaudiar-Pattam road?

MR. I. C. CHACKO: It must be the Chief Engineer in charge at the time.

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI: May I know whether it was an oral or written order?

MR. I. C. CHACKO: It is stated in the answer that the exact date of prohibition is not available.

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI: My question is whether it was an oral or written order.

MR. I. C. CHACKO: I cannot trace the order now.

*Vide Appendix VI page 644.

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